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ABSTRACT

This book offers a new culture-based framework that provides a way to research and develop curricula based on respect for diverse cultures. The Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) culture is used as an example to examine the reasons for prevailing stereotypes about American Indians and to explain how those stereotypes became the standard curriculum taught in America. Chapter 1 examines common stereotypes about American Indians (Noble Savages, Savage Savages, Living Fossils, Generic Indians) in academia, the media, and textbooks. Chapter 2 explores the academic theories behind stereotypes and provides insight on the creation of evolutionary theories and hierarchical scales that devalue indigenous cultures. Chapter 3 illustrates how such theories became the standard curriculum, which explains why diversity was not incorporated into textbooks. Chapter 4 presents the theories that support the culture-based curriculum framework, providing a new way to study diverse cultures and key elements for developing culture-based curriculum. Chapters 5 through 9 provide a case study in which a focus on corn is identified and utilized as a central theme to study the Haudenosaunee culture. The interaction of corn and culture is seen as structuring a world view and way of life, which provide the components for a holistic interdisciplinary framework for a culture-based curriculum. Teachers can use this conceptual model to develop a culturally sensitive curriculum on any culture. Appendixes give the text of the Thanksgiving Address, a thematic list and bibliography of Ernest Smith paintings, and interviews with a chief and a midwife on the cultural importance of corn. Contains references in chapter notes, a bibliography, figures, and maps. (SAS)